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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 128: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM (continued) (A/48/30 and Corr.1; A/C.5/48/4, A/C.5/48/17 and A/C.5/48/18)

AGENDA ITEM 129: UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM (continued) (A/48/9 and A/48/517; A/C.5/48/18)

1. Mr. BEL HADJ AMOR (Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission), replying to questions put by Member States during the debate, said that several delegations had rightly noted that the mandate of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) was not limited to remuneration-related issues, and the Commission was in fact increasingly devoting more attention in its work to the general problem of personnel management. Other delegations had expressed the view that the General Assembly should not have had to take up the question of a language incentive scheme for staff in the Professional and higher categories in a "non-personnel" year; the Commission had nevertheless thought that its recommendation that the arrangements adopted by the Assembly for the United Nations might be quickly taken up by other organizations ought to be considered without delay.

2. Some delegations had commented on the link between the base/floor salary scale and the mobility and hardship matrix. The question would be dealt with in detail when the Commission reported to the Assembly at its fifty-first session on the adjustment procedure linking the matrix to the scale; in the meantime it would also have examined the system of mobility and hardship allowances in the light of the experience gained from its application.

3. A question had been asked about the recommendation to the International Labour Organization (ILO) that it should bring its practice with respect to extra steps beyond the salary scale into line with the common system. The ILO Governing Body was to decide during the current week to eliminate the extra steps for staff recruited from 1 January 1994, and the Director-General had been requested to propose modalities for the elimination of the practice from 1 January 1995 for serving staff members.

4. With regard to the implementation of the survey of conditions of service for the General Service in Paris, the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had authorized its Director-General to apply to staff in the General Service and related categories from 1 January 1994 the salary scale and dependency allowances recommended by ICSC.

5. A question had been asked about the implications for the common system of the judgement of the ILO Administrative Tribunal concerning the General Service salary survey in Geneva and about the degree to which the Commission had been involved in defending its methodology. The ICSC secretariat had passed information about the survey to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) but the Commission itself had not been directly involved in explaining its procedure for using the results of the survey.

(Mr. Bel Hadj Amor)

6. The most difficult issue for ICSC had been the pensionable remuneration of General Service staff. After studying it for several years the Commission and the Joint Staff Pension Board had agreed on the methodology and its phased implementation. Their recommendations seemed to have general support among delegations, and in the general interest the Committee should now act swiftly.

7. In her statement on 8 November the President of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) had said that the questions for which ICSC was responsible ought to be dealt with by an independent and impartial body - implying that that was not the case at present. That old saw had been definitively put to rest during the recent review of the functioning of the Commission, when its independence had been acknowledged. The other points raised by FICSA had been discussed by the Commission with all the parties concerned. The Commission attached very great importance to dialogue, and that was why it had set up working groups to examine important issues in depth and try to find common ground. Of course, that approach could succeed only on the basis of mutual respect and it excluded any attitude which perceived dialogue as an exchange of ultimatums. FICSA was still participating in some of the working groups, and it would be desirable for it to resume full participation in the work of ICSC.

8. He was grateful to the members of the Committee for their support for the principles of the common system and their endorsement of the ICSC recommendations. The questions raised and suggestions made in the Committee would be transmitted to the Commission, which would continue to strive to strengthen the common system by striking the fairest balance between the concerns of Member States, the organizations and the staff.

9. Mr. INOMATA (Vice-Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) said that he was glad that the consensus recommendations of the Commission and the Pension Board on the pensionable remuneration of General Service staff had received general support. Although the use of 66.25 per cent of pensionable remuneration as the grossing-up factor had been more difficult for some delegations to accept than the income-replacement approach or the introduction of a common scale of staff assessment in 1997, that was not a reason for reopening what had been long and difficult negotiations. It would also be most desirable for the Committee to endorse in its totality the agreement reached by the Commission and the Board.

10. Some delegations had requested that future actuarial valuations of the Pension Fund should be disclosed in dollar terms. As requested by the General Assembly in resolution 47/203, the Board would consider the matter in 1994, taking into account the views of the Committee of Actuaries and the Board of Auditors. The comments about the Pension Fund's investments and its investment performance had been duly noted, but the question would be addressed at greater length in 1994.

11. Ms. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that the Cuban delegation welcomed in principle all the recommendations contained in the reports of ICSC and the Pension Board. Its reservations about the proposals set out in paragraph 85 of the ICSC report would no doubt be dispelled in the informal consultations, in which it hoped to participate.

12. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Committee and its officers, said that the dialogue with the staff associations was extremely important, provided that it took place in a calm atmosphere. The attendance record and competence of members of the Committee could not be questioned. Furthermore, the remarks by a staff representative about the validity of an election conducted by the Committee at its forty-seventh session were unseemly and unacceptable. If there were no further comments he would take it that the Committee had completed its general debate on items 128 and 129.

13. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 121: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/48/16 (Part I) and (Part II), A/48/277, A/48/281, A/48/428 and A/48/452)

14. Mrs. ALBRIGHT (United States of America) said that 40 years of super-Power rivalry, during which political priorities had taken precedence over management goals, had left the United Nations with a large bureaucracy. That was a luxury it could no longer afford since its responsibilities were growing and the potential for cooperative international action was greater than ever before, provided it was able to manage its programmes and operations efficiently. If Member States cared about the United Nations - and the United States did - then they should try to fix the problems, not ignore them. They should remember, too, that it was taxpayers' money that paid the bills, and that the taxpayers had a right to know their money was being spent wisely. Although the media sometimes exaggerated, there were many cases of inexcusable mismanagement. They not only weakened the United Nations, but were also an insult to the thousands of dedicated people who worked within the United Nations system, including many who risked and some who had lost their lives.

15. Her Government was convinced that the United Nations system had potential, but that that potential would never be achieved without administrative and budgetary reform addressing issues of transparency, accountability, oversight, enforcement of regulations and decisions and the management of personnel. It was necessary to take advantage of the fact that the above view was shared by many delegations and by the Secretary-General to bring about fundamental reform, otherwise the United Nations, like many public or private institutions, would be unable to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. That was what the United States proposed to do, in part by stressing the establishment of an independent function of inspector general.

16. It was true, as many delegations had pointed out, that good management and adequate resources went hand in hand. The United States recognized that its past withholding of its contributions had impaired the Organization's effectiveness, and it planned to pay more than $1 billion in regular budget and

(Mrs. Albright, United States)

peace-keeping assessments by the end of 1993. However, it would not unblinkingly accept ever-increasing assessments at a time when it was working to decrease government spending; on the contrary, United Nations-related expenditures would be subject to the same rigorous review as other expenditures.

17. Improved accountability and oversight were the key to Member confidence and financial stability. Those were long-standing issues that could no longer be sidestepped. United Nations operations had become too important, and waste might now be measured not only in financial resources but also in human lives. Yet while the Joint Inspection Unit and the Board of Auditors had clearly identified the problems, and the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies had repeatedly called upon the Secretariat to take corrective action, the response had been disappointing.

18. Although there was broad agreement on the need for reform in that area, opinions differed on how that was to be achieved. Whereas some argued that the current system was sound but required more resources, the United States believed, as did the Joint Inspection Unit, that the primary problem was one of using existing resources wisely. To do so, it was necessary to improve oversight of United Nations activities and finances by creating a mechanism that was independent from the Secretariat but still capable of cooperating fully with it. That was why the appointment and reporting procedures for the inspector general reflected a careful balance between the necessary independence of the inspector general, the prerogatives of the General Assembly and the accountability of the Secretary-General for United Nations operations and for implementing the inspector general's recommendations.

19. Thus the new oversight mechanism should be characterized by independence. Next, it should provide for regular follow up to ensure that corrective measures were effectively implemented and deficiencies corrected for in the past recommendations had been ignored. Lastly, the new system should combine many of the existing oversight and evaluation mechanisms under a single authority with separate reporting responsibilities to the Secretary-General and the General Assembly.

20. A great many countries had independent systems which examined government programmes and finances and reported to both the executive and legislative branches; in many countries that mechanism was known as an inspector general. The United States was convinced that the United Nations needed a similar system, and it applauded the Secretary-General's decision to establish an Office for Inspections and Investigations consolidating existing internal oversight mechanisms. It was pleased to note that that was only the first step in a much broader project, and looked forward to seeing it fully implemented. Initially, the future inspector general might be responsible for examining all United Nations regular budget, peace-keeping and extrabudgetary programmes and, later, all United Nations agencies and programmes. As President Clinton had said in his statement to the General Assembly, there was an urgent need to establish a strong mandate for an office of inspector general.

(Mrs. Albright, United States)

21. In that spirit, after consultations with a large number of Member States, her delegation had developed a proposal that could serve as a basis for defining the higher level independent authority contemplated by the Secretary-General. It requested the Chairman of the Committee to convene informal consultations to discuss the proposal so that a resolution could be drafted on that important question, if possible before the end of the regular session.

22. The purpose was not to impede the progress of United Nations programmes or the careers of its employees but to ensure the best possible use of its resources by consulting more with its staff, using their ideas and helping the Secretary-General to find new ways of solving the Organization's problems.

23. With respect to wrongdoing, her delegation thought that energetic measures were needed both to protect "whistle-blowers" and to ensure respect for the rights of those under investigation. Also, cases of proven wrongdoing should be settled quickly; that was not possible with the current cumbersome and ineffective appeal procedures.

24. Of course, establishing an office of inspector general would not in itself solve all of the problems. Her delegation had circulated a summary of a number of other proposals that might be included in a more general reform. She hoped that the Committee would examine them and compare them with those of other delegations so that a comprehensive and meaningful package of reforms could be adopted before the end of the forty-eighth session.

25. Mr. MARKER (Pakistan) said that it had become important for the Organization to review its work methods and to shed some bureaucratic structures that had outlived their usefulness, especially in view of the budgetary limitations. Nevertheless, restructuring must not become a perpetual process; before any further changes were attempted, the measures that had already been undertaken should be completed and the new structures should be tried out.

26. Some fundamental principles should be adhered to in any restructuring process; it should be in accordance therefore, with specific intergovernmental mandates and in full conformity with the purposes of the Charter.

27. Unfortunately, some decisions had been taken without substantive intergovernmental dialogue on the general orientation of the restructuring and seemed to have left the Organization in a state of flux, creating dissatisfaction in certain sectors of the Secretariat. In that connection, his delegation had listened with the greatest interest to the statement of the United States representative, and it would give the closest consideration to the proposals in the working paper circulated by that delegation.

28. Some Member States had noted with concern the inadequate allocation of resources to the economic and social sectors of the United Nations in the budget proposals for the biennium 1994-1995. Priorities agreed on at the intergovernmental level should not be changed nor should certain areas be emphasized at the expense of others which were of priority concern to the majority of States Members.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

29. Pakistan welcomed the creation of three new departments in the economic and social field. That was a step in the right direction, provided there was close coordination between them.

30. Turning to the question of the regional commissions, he said that their task was macroeconomic policy analysis and coordination. They should not function as mini-United Nations at the regional level, nor should they become the operational arm of the United Nations development system; that role had been allocated to the specialized agencies and, increasingly, to non-governmental organizations. The regional commissions should instead become "centres of excellence", specializing in the systematic analysis of regional macroeconomic trends and opportunities.

31. The decentralization of functions between Headquarters, regional centres and field offices should be carried out in the context of creating the necessary "capacity" at the three levels. It should also provide programme managers with the necessary authority to design programmes at the country level.

32. The United Nations had an important role to play in trade and international finance, and those issues should receive central attention; administrative structures and budgetary allocations should reflect those priorities.

33. Programme planning was an essential factor in reconciling the intergovernmental mandates entrusted to the various agencies, hence the importance of the medium-term plan. Any change in its format must be made with great care and through an intergovernmental process.

34. Pakistan endorsed the recommendations concerning the role of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping contained in "An Agenda for Peace". The Charter indeed attached the highest priority to conflict resolution. However, the most serious threats to peace arose largely at the regional level. The arms race was also increasingly acquiring a regional dimension. The United Nations should therefore become seriously involved in regional security concerns.

35. Pakistan believed that human rights were indivisible and interrelated and that it was necessary to ensure universal realization of economic, social and cultural rights, particularly the right to self-determination and the right to development. In that respect, it attached great importance to the Centre for Human Rights and was following with interest the new mechanisms proposed in that field.

36. To ensure effective oversight, Member States should closely monitor the manner in which intergovernmental mandates were implemented. That could be facilitated by increasing the accountability of programme managers. In that regard, his delegation noted, from the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/452), that he intended to carry out a thorough review of the accountability and responsibilities of staff at all levels.

37. Mr. DEINEKO (Russian Federation) regretted that the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring and efficiency of the Secretariat (A/48/428) was more descriptive than analytical, and that the information provided did not make it possible to analyse the programmatic impact of the restructuring of the Secretariat, although that had been one of the purposes of resolution 47/212 of the General Assembly.

38. In regard to the reform of the Secretariat, his delegation supported the proposal - just reiterated by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America - regarding the establishment of an office of inspector general. It hoped that Member States would be able to agree on the place of the future office within the current structure and its relationships with intergovernmental control bodies.

39. Regarding the prototype of a new format of the medium-term plan, his delegation noted the clarity and concision of the report submitted on the issue (A/48/277), which could be explained, at least in part, by the seminar held on that topic in April 1993. The seminar was an excellent illustration of the benefits of a working dialogue between the Secretary-General and Member States, which should become the norm. His delegation was disappointed to note, however, that a year must elapse before the question of a new format of the medium-term plan could be discussed.

40. Although it was true that, in its current form, the medium-term plan was a flagrant example of the squandering of resources, that did not mean that programme planning could be dispensed with. Furthermore, the plan was also an essential instrument of control over the implementation of the mandates issued by decision-making bodies.

41. His delegation supported the idea of the "Perspective" which, according to document A/48/277, would analyse the problems and trends that the international community should address over the next four to six years and would define the Organization's priorities. The "Perspective" could be used to prepare a second document which would simply list major programmes, programmes and subprogrammes and contain guidelines for evaluating the preparation and execution of programme budgets.

42. In regard to the issue of accountability and responsibility of programme managers in the United Nations, his delegation fully supported the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

43. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) agreed that, as stated by the Committee for Programme and Coordination, the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring and efficiency of the Secretariat (A/48/428) was more descriptive than analytical and not in line with the General Assembly's request. He was glad, therefore, that that Committee had asked the Secretary-General to prepare a report for the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly showing the programmatic impact of the restructuring measures.

(Mr. Zahid, Morocco)

44. Morocco believed that the establishment by the Secretary-General of an Office of Inspections and Investigations and the proposal by the representative of the United States of America on the establishment of an office of inspector general should be given close consideration by the Fifth Committee, on the grounds that they were in keeping with the effort to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations.

45. In his report on a possible new approach to programme planning (A/48/277) the Secretary-General recognized that the efficiency of the current system of programme planning was being called into question by both the Secretariat and Member States. He suggested replacing the Introduction to the medium-term plan by a policy-level "Perspective", and the plan itself by a programme of work. His delegation opposed the suggestion contained in paragraph 15 of the report that "Perspective" should inspire Member States to seek solutions to the problems and challenges ahead. The United Nations should not become involved in seeking solutions to problems and challenges, lest it find itself far removed from reality.

46. The idea of replacing the medium-term plan by a medium-term programme of work was very interesting but required more in-depth consideration. The same held true for the idea that the specialized agencies should play a central role in the adoption of the programme of work (para. 25), the proposal to take extrabudgetary activities into consideration (para. 26) and priority-setting.

47. Mr. MOHAMAD (Qatar) said that the members of the Joint Inspection Unit had made a very useful contribution to efforts to reform the Organization by rationalizing its work and enhancing the efficiency of its administrative and financial functioning. Like any man-made organization, the United Nations must design and introduce oversight mechanisms which would enable it to implement its programmes more effectively, cut costs, realize savings and maintain high staff morale. At the current juncture, such oversight and cost-cutting mechanisms should be not only consolidated but also adapted to the changes taking place in the world and within the Organization.

48. A close examination of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit showed positive developments: JIU had decided that, in future, its work programme would be based on such priority questions as administrative and budgetary issues, management issues, operational activities for development, and peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance, in accordance with the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions.

49. Under the circumstances, his delegation believed that the Joint Inspection Unit should be strengthened by all possible means so that it could carry out the tasks assigned to it under articles 5 and 6 of its Statute. Its independence should enable it to make a substantial contribution to improving the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations. In that connection, it was sufficient to note that, according to the calculations cited by the Chairman of JIU, the implementation of the Unit's recommendations had resulted in savings of $75 million during the period in question. His delegation, for its part, supported all the recommendations contained in the

(Mr. Mohamad, Qatar)

reports submitted by JIU at the forty-sixth, forty-seventh and forty-eighth sessions and, in particular, the recommendations on accountability and oversight, the rationalization of peace-keeping operations and the control and limitation of documentation.

50. Mr. OWADE (Kenya), commenting on the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring and efficiency of the Secretariat (A/48/428), expressed concern about the fact that, increasingly, the United Nations was placing emphasis on the maintenance of international peace and security and human rights at the expense of socio-economic issues. And yet, if there was one lesson to be learned from history, it was that there could be no international peace and security or respect for human rights where poverty prevailed. Conversely, countries which had experienced a degree of socio-economic progress enjoyed greater political stability. The international community must therefore accord the same priority to development questions as to peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance, and that priority must be reflected in the budget of the United Nations.

51. Moving to a question of more specific concern to his delegation, he referred to the statement by the Secretary-General that the "core of his managerial strategy was to secure a more rational distribution of responsibilities between Headquarters and the United Nations centres at Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna as well as among global, regional and field structures". His delegation hoped to see the "more rational distribution" reflected in terms of both activities, including conferences, and funding. As the only city in the third world that was a United Nations centre, the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Nairobi deserved to have both its resources and personnel strengthened.

52. His delegation noted with concern that, in his reorganization programme, the Secretary-General proposed placing UNEP and Habitat "under common direction". His delegation believed that the two organizations should retain their separate identities. The General Assembly had considered the matter at its forty-seventh session and had called upon the Secretary-General to appoint an Executive Director of Habitat. His delegation was pleased to note that the budget for the biennium 1994-1995 took that request into account, but was disappointed that it was taking so long to make the appointment.

53. His delegation supported the strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights. The Centre should receive adequate funding in order to be able to fulfil its mandate and, in particular, to ensure respect for the right to development, which the World Conference on Human Rights, held in 1993, had recognized as a human right.

AGENDA ITEM 125: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (continued) (A/46/34; A/47/34, A/47/669 and A/47/755; A/48/34, A/48/83 and Add.1, A/48/129 and A/48/383; A/C.5/45/75; A/C.5/46/17)

54. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria), noting that the Joint Inspection Unit was currently the only body ensuring overall external oversight on a system-wide basis, said that its substantive strengthening had become urgent. The consolidation of existing mechanisms would be preferable to creating new ones. Her delegation wished to commend the Unit on its recent initiatives, which should make it possible to adjust to changing needs and fulfil Member States' expectations. In that context, her delegation noted with satisfaction that the Unit intended to focus greater attention on management, budgetary and administrative issues and to concentrate its inspection, evaluation and investigation activities in four interrelated areas, namely, management, budgetary and administrative issues, operational activities for development, peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance.

55. The changes already introduced in accordance with recent General Assembly resolutions, such as the increase in the number of reports, the readiness to gear its work programme to the priorities of Member States and the desire expressed by certain Inspectors to re-establish inspection activities, were steps in the right direction. In order to respond more effectively to the need for better management and more rational use of resources by the participating organizations, the Unit should take into account any required or potential savings when establishing and implementing its work programme. By adopting more specific, more action-oriented recommendations, it could enhance the impact of its activities.

56. However, in order for the Joint Inspection Unit to function optimally, in accordance with its mandate, the participating organizations must also make an effort to ensure the timely issuance of their comments on JIU reports relating to them. In that context, it would also be necessary to ensure that the Unit's recommendations were implemented without delay once they had been approved by the governing bodies.

57. Furthermore, her delegation wished to know the estimated cost savings resulting from the different recommendations formulated by the Unit. Those figures, which could be included in its annual report, would facilitate an assessment of the practicability of its proposals.

58. The reform currently undertaken by JIU required additional support, not only by the secretariats of the participating organizations but also by Member States, which must devote sufficient time and attention to the consideration of the Unit's findings. By taking a new approach to the Joint Inspection Unit, the General Assembly could surely contribute to the desired strengthening of its role.

59. The JIU reports on the procedures used by the United Nations Secretariat regarding accountability and oversight and staffing for the United Nations peace-keeping and related missions (civilian component) were of great value to the work of the General Assembly. The latter report, in particular, provided a

(Ms. Rotheiser, Austria)

valuable overview of the planning, management and staffing of peace-keeping operations.

60. Mr. KHENE (Algeria) reaffirmed his delegation's support for the Joint Inspection Unit as a major oversight body and said that it fully supported the strengthening of that mechanism for dialogue. JIU had a number of advantages and it must be given the means to use them: apart from ACABQ, it was the only one of the oversight bodies empowered to look into the functioning of the main agencies of the United Nations system and of the system itself. It was uniquely placed to consider and compare the implementation of the main administrative functions and, on the basis of that comparative examination, to make general recommendations with respect to management and finances. The Unit's independence from officials of organizations and its broad representativeness were two other considerable advantages.

61. The positive changes that had occurred recently, namely, the improved quality of reports, the increasingly collegial approach evident in the work of JIU and the willingness to devise a programme of work of greater interest to Member States, should be encouraged. Member States, for their part, should provide the Joint Inspection Unit with the means it needed to carry out its tasks and participating organizations should show greater readiness to cooperate with the Unit.

62. The Unit's work on the civilian component in peace-keeping operations, on accountability and on an integrated library network would definitely contribute to the Organization's operational efficiency. He expressed the hope that the report on analysis of cost savings from JIU reports 1985-1992, would soon be made available to the delegations. Consideration of the report could be crucial to the follow-up of other recommendations. Studies and research should not take precedence over inspections and investigations.

63. Mrs. DAES (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit) said that the prevailing climate at the forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions of the General Assembly during the consideration of the annual reports of the Joint Inspection Unit had not been encouraging and that, for various reasons, the Fifth Committee had been unable to give due consideration to the reports. As a number of representatives had noted during the current discussions, the Joint Inspection Unit had changed its attitude and approach. The constructive comments and views expressed in particular during the previous two sessions of the Fifth Committee had been carefully studied and taken into account. In drawing up its programme of work and preparing individual reports, the Joint Inspection Unit had been guided in particular by the latest recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the recent relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the wishes expressed by the participating organizations. The tribute paid by the delegations of the Fifth Committee, during the current session, to the Inspectors for their determined efforts and excellent work constituted a source of encouragement but also of greater responsibility. JIU was thus challenged to do more in the years ahead in order to better serve the agencies of the United Nations system.

(Mrs. Daes)

64. She noted with appreciation that some of the Unit's reports had already been favourably considered under the various agenda items to which they related. Concerning the cost-effectiveness of JIU recommendations during the period 1985 to 1992, the United States delegation had wanted to know the data on which the estimates had been based. The report on analysis of cost savings from JIU reports, 1985-1992, prepared by a senior consultant (Mr. Saddler), had already been published in English as JIU/REP/1993/7. Pending its translation into other official languages, the original version was being processed to be made available to all delegations.

65. The delegation of Poland had referred in particular to the selection and appointment of Inspectors and to the need to organize in the Fifth Committee an open hearing of candidates being considered as Inspectors. That was a policy matter exclusively within the competence of the General Assembly. In any case, the present composition of JIU was satisfactory and in accordance with article 2 of the Unit's Statute.

66. The delegation of Canada had made two very important and constructive suggestions: the first concerned participation, with the United Nations Secretariat, in developing a system of performance evaluations, including for senior officials, and the second, performance of a cost analysis of benefits of various procedures for recruitment of civilian staff for peace-keeping operations (roster, United Nations Volunteers, contractors, United Nations Secretariat). The Joint Inspection Unit would give those suggestions due consideration.

67. The Committee would have further opportunities to continue the discussion of the Joint Inspection Unit's work when it took up consideration of some individual reports on specific issues particularly the reports on staffing of United Nations peace-keeping and related missions (civilian component) (A/48/421) and on accountability and oversight in the United Nations Secretariat (A/48/420). JIU would continue to welcome all proposals from ACABQ that the Unit should inspect or investigate matters that it felt warranted particular attention.

68. As an independent, system-wide entity, responsible for inspection, investigation and evaluation, JIU had a unique and historic role to play. She was convinced that the Unit would effectively contribute, mainly through its action-oriented recommendations, to cost savings and, in general, to the solution of the world's most urgent contemporary problems. The Unit's very limited but efficient staff would spare no efforts to increase transparency and efficiency, promote the most effective methodology and coordination, and improve the management, evaluation and accountability of the United Nations system. In order to achieve those goals, the Joint Inspection Unit should be strengthened and provided with appropriate human and material resources. That particular point had been stressed by a number of delegations. JIU intended to continue to work closely with the United Nations Secretariat, and in particular, with the Department of Administration and Management. She expressed thanks to the delegations for the keen interest they had shown in the JIU reports before them

(Mrs. Daes)

and for the wise guidance that they would no doubt provide the Unit during the current session.

69. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that her delegation had proposed that an evaluation of recruitment and appointment policies should be included in the JIU programme of work for 1994-1995. In that connection, her delegation had indicated that it wished to see included in such evaluation a review of the methodology for applying the principle of equitable geographical distribution, including to high-level posts. Her delegation had also asked the representative of the Secretariat how the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the strengthening of the JIU secretariat, particularly the recommendation regarding its computerization, were going to be implemented. Cuba wanted reference to be made in particular to computerization.

70. Mr. DUVAL (Department of Administration and Management) said that the representative of Cuba was referring to the recommendation in paragraph 42 of the Advisory Committee's report at the previous session (A/47/755), in which the Advisory Committee mentioned the need to increase the computer resources of JIU in the context of the proposed programme budget, taking account of the contribution computers might make to improving productivity. In early 1992, JIU had only a few computer work stations. Substantial resources had been earmarked for the purchase of 16 work stations during the current biennium. While bearing in mind the concern for cost-effectiveness expressed by the Advisory Committee during the consideration of all the budgets of administrative activities jointly financed by the organizations, the proposed programme budget for the 1994-1995 biennium provided for the gradual computerization of JIU.

71. The CHAIRMAN announced that the general debate on agenda item 125 had been concluded.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.